BILL 92 CONCERNING THE GREATER MONTRÉAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Explanatory document

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1. BRIEF SUMMARY OF CONTEXT OF BILL

For over thirty years, the Greater Montréal Area has been the subject of a number of studies, most of which ended up on the shelf. The first studies date back to the early '60s and the latest - done by the *Task Force on Greater Montréal* - was made public in December 1993. One after another, analysts who reviewed the situation almost always identified the same phenomena as being obstacles to Greater Montréal's harmonious development: the absence of a metropolitan vision for the future, a lack of concerted action, and duplication of efforts by multiple organizational structures.

In general, most of the decision-makers and observers on the metropolitan scene agree that Greater Montréal is facing four main challenges today:

- **Greater Montréal's economic vitality** - a challenge that tasks decision makers with creating a vision for the future, establishing guidelines together and setting economic development action priorities.

- **Balanced urban growth** - a challenge that tasks the region with planning the territory's overall development for sustainable growth and a viable economy.

- **Harmonious social development** - a challenge to create conditions favorable to maintaining and improving the quality of life of the various groups of citizens that make up Greater Montréal society.

- **Effective organization and equitable financing of metropolitan services** - a challenge to take charge of the areas of metropolitan responsibility in a way that will ensure the effective and fair management of such services.

2. THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT

Given this situation, the Government has committed itself to establishing an agency for concerted action at the metropolitan level. In so doing, it was primarily inspired by the main items of consensus that emerged from the Consultation Forum held in early November 1996.

3. THE MISSION OF THE COMMISSION

The primary mission of this Commission will be **to support Greater Montréal's development, to ensure unity of action and to develop a vision for Montréal's future.**

To these ends, the Commission will ensure that the actions of local and regional authorities are concerted and consistent, and will promote harmonious relations between local, regional and Governmental authorities. The ministère de la Métropole will play an important role in facilitating the outcome of this mission, chiefly through better coordination of the Government's actions within the Greater Montréal area.

4. A NEW WAY TO SUPPORT GREATER MONTRÉAL'S DEVELOPMENT

The proposed Commission will embody **a willingness to compromise on the expectations** expressed by various metropolitan players. It will intervene in areas of responsibility deemed strategic for Greater Montréal's future. The scope of its authority will extend beyond the simple consultative role some people favored, but it will not be at a regional government as others would have liked. The Commission proposed by the Government will therefore represent a middle ground between these two organizational models.

The proposed Commission will also be **a venue for partnership between Greater Montréal and the Government**. Within its areas of strategic authority, the Commission will be empowered to develop metropolitan guidelines and set action priorities in cooperation with the departments concerned. The Commission's plans will take effect after being ratified by the Government. The latter will also specify the conditions binding the departments and agencies to the Commission's choices.

In other words, Greater Montréal will have an agency that will bring together the primary decision makers, that will have adequate resources to act, and that will adopt a partnership process. Indeed, it is important to create a place where the Government and Greater Montréal will work together to find the most efficient and consistent solutions possible, and to create conditions that will guarantee a promising future for Greater Montréal. It is in this spirit that this Bill is proposed, and it most assuredly represents a new way of doing things within Greater Montréal.

5 COMMISSION'S PRIMARY FEATURES

The Commission will be streamlined, flexible, inexpensive and "evolutionary".

- **Streamlined** - The Commission will have 40 members; the greater part of its staff will be seconded from departments.
- **Flexible** - Appointment methods will be simple, uncomplicated and easy to apply to facilitate the appointment process.
- **Inexpensive** - The Commission will plan, coordinate and mandate, but will not manage; members will not be paid; in the initial phase, operating costs will not exceed $2.5 million per year.
- **"Evolutionary"** - The scope of the Commission's powers and the extent of its responsibilities can be increased over time. In addition, the Commission will have an optional mandate to make recommendations regarding its method of operation, authorities, ways of appointing its members, etc. The Bill specifies what is to be implemented during the initial phase and provides certain conditions for the planning of subsequent phases.

6. COMMISSION TERRITORY

The Bill recognizes the Montréal Urban Community (MUC) and the Regional County Municipalities (RCMs) as basic components, in conformance with the wishes of the elected municipal officials. The territorial integrity of these components will also be respected (with one exception). The Commission's territory will therefore include:

- Montréal Urban Community;
- RCMs in the southern off-island suburbs: Champlain, La Vallée-du-Richelieu, Lajemmerais, Roussillon and Vaudreuil-Soulanges (CMA portion only);
- RCMs in the northern off-island suburbs: Laval, l'Assomption, Des Moulins, Thérèse-De Blainville, Deux-Montagnes and Mirabel;
- Territory of Kahnawake.

For the most part, the Commission's territory is the same as that of the ministère de la Métropole. Although the following RCMs are partly included in the Ministère's territory - i.e., the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) - they will not be part of the Commission's territory:

- La Rivière-du-Nord (northern off-island suburbs) RCM;
- Argenteuil (northern off-island suburbs) RCM;
- Autray (northern off-island suburbs) RCM;
- Beauharnois-Salaberry (southern off-island suburbs) RCM;
- Rouville (southern off-island suburbs) RCM;

These RCMs will be excluded from the Commission's territory since only a small portion of their population is included in the CMA territory, the exception being La Rivière-du-Nord RCM where part of the territory has only been included in the RCM since the 1996 census. The Commission could recommend that the Government enlarge its territory to include any of these components in whole or in part.

The integral intervention territory option was preferred over that of a territory with variable geometry depending on areas of authority. To ensure **consistency** of action, to deal with **inter-dependencies** among metropolitan-level matters, and to facilitate the emergence of a **sense of belonging** and an **overall development vision**, choosing a unique, unified territory was imperative. The population within the Commission's territory includes 3.3 million inhabitants.

7. COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP AND MEMBER APPOINTMENT METHODS

The Commission will include **40 members** and its composition will be **mixed**. It will have:

- 26 representatives from a municipal setting who will form a two-thirds majority;
- 13 socioeconomic decision makers from various sectors will comprise the remaining third;
- the Minister of State for Greater Montréal who will act as chairperson.

Some members will be appointed automatically: the mayors of the three large cities (Montréal, Laval and Longueuil), wardens from each RCM, and the Chairperson of the Montréal Urban Community Executive Committee. Other elected officials will be appointed by their respective council.

In addition to respecting the *Table des préfets et maires du Grand Montréal (TPM)'s* **elected officials group constituent formula**, the Commission's membership will be based on **proportional representation**. Thus, in the case of the City of Montréal, other cities in the MUC, Laval and the RCM of Champlain, one representative per segment of 150,000 inhabitants will sit on the Commission's Council. In all, 26 municipal Commission membership will be equally shared between the island of Montréal and the northern and southern off-island suburbs. (See Appendix 1)

The 13 socioeconomic representatives will be selected by the Government after consultation with the groups concerned: business people, unions, community sector, transportation, environment, tourism and culture.

A mixed membership has the advantage of bringing together at the metropolitain level elected officials representing various local interests and socioeconomic players. Their wide range of concerns will help the Commission to deal with the interdependence of metropolitan issues more effectively when making decisions that are metropolitan in scope. **In particular, it is a matter of empowering the greatest number of players whose decisions have an impact on Greater Montréal's development**.

8. METHOD OF OPERATION

The Commission is comprised of a Council of 40 members including its chairperson - the Minister of State for Greater Montréal - and two vice-chairpersons appointed by the Government from among the members. The Council will meet at least four times per year and its meetings will be open to the public. To provide a method of operation that is as simple as possible, each member will have one vote and decisions will be taken by majority vote. The chairperson will not have a vote. Those departmental deputy ministers with whom the Commission will work closely may participate in Council deliberations but will not have the right to vote.

The Commission will have an **Executive Committee** comprised of eight members including the Council's chairperson and two vice-chairpersons. The five other members of the Executive Committee will be appointed by the Commission's Council.

9. COMMISSION'S PRIMARY AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Commission will have the authority to intervene in the following strategic areas of responsibility:

A. Economic development

The Commission will be responsible for preparing **guidelines** and setting **strategic action priorities** in economic development matters, including investment prospecting and promotion of tourism abroad, in cooperation with the ministère de l'Industrie, du Commerce, de la Science et de la Technologie.

It will adopt its guidelines and strategic action priorities by June 1998. It will be able to conclude a framework agreement with the Government on the implementation of its guidelines and priorities.

The Commission may also be empowered through Governmental decree to carry out related mandates such as development or promotional fund management. The Commission will be able to assign specific mandates to agencies or municipalities with respect to foreign investment prospecting and promotion of tourism.

B. Metropolitain planning

The Commission will be responsible for preparing a **metropolitan planning framework** in cooperation with the ministère des Affaires municipales. For its part, the latter will be responsible to make known to the Commission the Government's guidelines in planning matters, including facility and infrastructure projects.

In particular, the metropolitan planning framework will include the major planning guidelines for the region, urbanization criteria for future urban development within the territory, definition of subregional poles of activity of metropolitan interest, use of existing and projected infrastructure and facilities of metropolitan interest, and criteria for harmonizing RCM and MUC development plans in accordance with the metropolitan planning framework.

The Commission will adopt its metropolitan planning framework by December 1998. The Government may approve the metropolitan planning framework by decree indicating the manner in which its departments and agencies will be bound. The ministère des Affaires municipales will be responsible for harmonizing MUC and RCM development plans in conformity with the metropolitan planning framework guidelines and rules.

C. Transportation

The Commission will be responsible for developing an integrated **transportation plans for people and goods** in cooperation with the ministère des Transports and the Agence métropolitaine de transport. For its part, the ministère des Transports will be in charge of conveying to the Commission the Government's policy on transport matters.

The transportation plan will identify the facilities and systems that will form the metropolitan network, both in terms of public transportation and highway, air, sea and rail transport; it will also contain guidelines on the role, development and operation of transport systems of metropolitan interest. It will identify the appropriate interventions and actions in response to metropolitan concerns and challenges in transport and will define their funding methods.

The Commission will adopt its transportation plan by December 1998. The Government may ratify the transportation plan through a decree indicating the manner in which its departments and agencies will be bound by this.

D. Waste management

The Commission will be responsible for preparing an integrated **waste management plan** for the Commission's territory in cooperation with the ministère de l'Environnement et de la Faune as part of implementation of its waste materials management policy.

The management plan will indicate the categories and amounts of waste materials to be treated and will determine methods for adding value to waste materials and eliminating waste, as well as the location of facilities and their funding methods.

The Commission will adopt the waste management plan by the end of 1999 or during the two years following adoption of the Government's policy. The Government may ratify the management plan through a decree describing the manner in which its departments and agencies will be bound by this plan.

10. COMMISSION'S SPECIAL RECOMMENDATION MANDATES

The Commission will make recommendations to the Government on the following matters:

- existing municipal, regional or governmental structures acting on the Commission's territory no later than December 31, 1998 for the purpose of streamlining and eliminating those that are, or will become, redundant;
- management of air and water quality on its territory and method of funding for such activities, by June 30, 1999;
- recreational, cultural and tourist facilities or socio-cultural and sporting events of a metropolitan nature, their management and funding, by December 31, 1998;
- powers, funding and membership of the Agence métropolitaine de transport, by December 31, 1998.

If the Commission deems it necessary, it may submit recommendations to the Government on other matters such as:

- additional authority, powers, territory, membership and funding for the Commission, as well as representation and membership appointment methods;
- creation of specialized agencies to carry out Commission functions or other metropolitan functions;
- organization and funding of municipal services;
- directions that the Minister could give to the Agence métropolitaine de transport with respect to its objectives and guidelines in the exercise of its powers;
- possibility of creating a development fund and ways to finance it.

11. COMMISSION'S GENERAL POWERS

The Commission will have general powers to carry out its mission. In particular, it will be able to form study committees, carry out or mandate research, grant financial assistance to agencies, assume delegated powers such as development fund management, and conclude agreements with foreign agencies.

12. OPERATING COSTS

The Commission will have no independent source of funding during the implementation phase. The Government will assume the costs for the Commission's operation and secretariat. These costs are estimated to be $2.5 million annually.

Commission members will not be paid unless the Government decides otherwise. The Commission's financial management will obey the minimal rules ensuring a balance between revenues and expenditures, and certification by the treasurer that credit is available before expenditure commitments are made. Financial statements will be produced and audited annually, and an annual report will be produced.

APPENDIX I

COMPONENTS AND POPULATIONS

Component	No. of municipalities	Population	Members	Total

APPENDIX 2

MUNICIPALITIES INCLUDED IN THE COMMISSION'S TERRITORY BY COMPONENT, MUC AND RCM

MONTRÉAL URBAN COMMUNITY	1995 Population

NORTHERN OFF-ISLAND SUBURBS

REGIONAL COUNTY MUNICIPALITY	1995 Population

Sub-total

SOUTHERN OFF-ISLAND SUBURBS

REGIONAL COUNTY MUNICIPALITY	1995 Population

Sub-total

GRAND TOTAL